

**Strong and Weak Verbs in Early Modern English.** The Middle English tendency for strong verbs to become weak continued during the Renaissance. A number of verbs which had been strong in Old English and which are now weak fluctuated between the two forms. A few weak verbs developed strong forms but most of these, like all the new verbs entering the language, are now exclusively weak. Identify the underlined past tense verbs as strong (S) or weak (W). (5 points)

- a. \_\_\_\_ Three times to day I holpe him to his horse (2 Henry VI 5.3.8)
- b. \_\_\_\_ The first was I that help'd thee to the Crowne (Richard III 5.3.167)
- c. \_\_\_\_ The frame and huge foundation of the Earth Shak'd like a Coward (1 Henry IV 3.1.16-7)
- d. \_\_\_\_ Oh, then the Earth shooke to see the Heauens on fire (1 Henry IV 3.1.25)
- e. \_\_\_\_ Beheld them when they lighted, how they clung / In their Embrace (Henry VIII 1.1.9-10)
- f. \_\_\_\_ He on the suddaine cling'd her so about (Marlowe: *Hero and Leander* 2.314)
- g. \_\_\_\_ As to a stomack serv'd, whose insides meete, / Meate comes, it came; and swole our sailes (Donne: *Storme* 20-1)
- h. \_\_\_\_ And Sidnus swell'd about the Bakes (Cymbeline 2.4.71)
- i. \_\_\_\_ Many devout persons came and sticked in the dowy Image pretious (Gage: *West Ind.* [1648], in *OED*)
- j. \_\_\_\_ He stucke them vp before the fulsome Ewes (Merchant of Venice 1.3.87)

**Strong and Weak Verbs.** The Old English forms of the above verbs are shown in the chart at right. Examine the Old English verb forms to determine whether they are weak or strong verbs, and then fill in the chart with the information. Then fill in the Early Modern English column based on the sample sentences in the previous exercise. Lastly, using your own knowledge of current English, fill in the Present Day English column; write S (Strong), W (Weak), or S/W (variable usage). If you think there is a variable usage of the PDE verb, give the verb forms. (10 points)

Old English				
Gloss	Infinitive	Sg. Past	Pl. Past	Past Part.
'help'	helpan	healp	hulpon	holpen
'shake'	scacan	scōc	scōcon	scacen
'cling'	clingan	clang	clungon	clungen
'swell'	swellan	sweal	swullon	swollen
'stick'	stician	sticode		sticod

	Old English	Early Modern English	Present Day English
'help'			
'shake'			
'cling'			
'swell'			
'stick'			